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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to provide general goals for evaluating the language arts programs at any level from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. The general and specific objectives used are based on those recognized by the National Council of Teachers of English to reflect basic skills. The guide is intended to be a flexible tool for improving existing programs, providing continuity throughout a system, and ensuring that each school has a sense of direction. The major section presents a checklist that evaluates the current program according to its general and specific goals. A chart provides a method for comparing the self-appraisal scores with the possible scores. Additional sections help educators develop a philosophy and rationale for the language arts program; examine the student outcomes expected; compile listings of the skills and concepts taught in all courses; list resources available to all teachers; list the needs and recommendations that have become apparent during the evaluation; develop a checklist of essential skills for all levels of the program; and develop course descriptions. (Author/IRT)

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CURRICULUM REVIEW HANDBOOK

LANGUAGE ARTS

Oklahoma State Dept. of Education

1981-82

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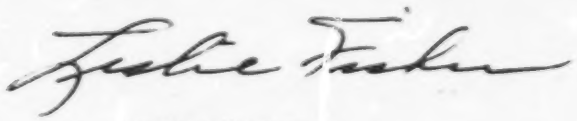
FOREWORD

Language is an integral part of the total school curriculum. It is interrelated in every way. Language is used to reinforce all subject matter incidental to learning.

A language arts program should have sequential steps that develop language skills spiraling from one level to another, a link that is vital to all phases of the educational process.

The impact of the current legislation continues to focus toward more state and federal control of basic skills, competency testing, and continual professional preparation. However, we will strive to keep the local district's needs in mind. This handbook will assist you in evaluating each component of your program, in addition to gaining insight for future directions.



Leslie Fisher
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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State Department of Education

With Special Thanks To:

The Oklahoma Curriculum Improvement Commission

Robert H. LaGrone, Chairman

PREFACE

This Language Arts Curriculum Review Handbook is designed to provide general goals for evaluating the language arts program kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The examination of the philosophy and the role of the administration and total school are included to emphasize the relationship of every resource. The general and specific objectives are based on those recognized by the National Council of Teachers of English to reflect basic skills.

This guide is not intended to dictate a program but rather serve as a flexible tool for improving existing programs, providing continuity throughout all systems, and insuring that each school has a sense of direction in the area of language arts.

PHILOSOPHY

Language is the medium for all learning; language arts skills are basic to education. Those skills include thinking, listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Effective communication through the integration of grammar, writing, and literature is a fundamental goal. The teaching of language arts skills should address student needs and abilities in all areas of life. However, the acquiring of language arts skills is not the exclusive province of the school but should be a joint effort of the school, home, and community.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The major goals of language arts are shown separately to emphasize teaching strands; yet, in actual classroom application they are interrelated and are not independent categories.

I. Listening

- A. Reception
- B. Processing

II. Speaking

- A. Development of confidence
- B. Communication of ideas
- C. Sense of audience

III. Reading

- A. Knowledge of great literature of mankind
- B. Expansion of vocabulary (connotation and denotation)
- C. Reading for pleasure
- D. Literal and interpretive comprehension

IV. Writing

- A. Integration of grammar, composition, and literature
- B. Legible penmanship
- C. Spelling proficiency

V. Thinking Skills

- A. Application
- B. Analysis
- C. Synthesis
- D. Evaluation

VI. Application of mass media to language arts

- A. Critical and evaluative skills
- B. Art forms
- C. Educational resource

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Philosophy and Rationale 1

II. Expected Student Outcomes 2

III. Education Program: Outlines, Concepts, Skills . . 3

IV. Program Evaluation

A. General Checklist 6

B. Specific Checklist 12

C. Score Comparison Chart 18

V. Resources 19

VI. Needs and Recommendations 21

VII. Checklist of Essential Skills 22

VIII. Program Description 23

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I. Philosophy and Rationale

It is imperative that each school examine the objectives and philosophy of its language arts program with the total program and with long-range needs identified by the community. Therefore, teachers need to consider carefully the following questions.

A. What do we believe about the unique nature of language arts?

B. What do we believe about the students we teach?

C. What do we believe about our responsibilities as educators/language arts teachers?

D. What do we believe about the ultimate purpose of language arts?

E. Review responses to the above questions. Then explain why language arts is included in your schools' curriculum.

II. Expected Student Outcomes

Expected outcomes should accommodate the individual needs, goals, and abilities of all students.

1. Is the assessment of the students' needs in communication skills current? And are these needs known to all teachers in the system?

2. Are parents and students aware of individual needs and helping to establish realistic goals in communication skills?

3. Is the system meeting the needs of all ability levels?

4. Is there flexibility in the program to develop each students' potential (scheduling, course offerings, etc.)?

III. Education Program: Outline, Concepts, Skills

Before evaluating an existing program, language arts teachers need to review their total program (K-12). A compiling of skills and concepts taught on all levels will assist in determining existing duplication or omission.

A. List all language art subjects/courses.

EDUCATION PROGRAM (Continued)

B. Subject/course explanation

1. Give brief outline of each course and/or grade level taught.

2. What major concepts are taught in each subject/course level?

3. What essential skills are taught in each subject/course level?

EDUCATION PROGRAM (Continued)

Subject/course explanation
(continued)

(a) Which skills are unique in your subject area?

(b) Which skills are shared with other subject areas?

(c) What practical, life-long skills are taught in your subject/course?

IV. Program Evaluation

Existing language arts program should have a definite scope and sequence that incorporates skills relevant to critical thinking and problem solving.

A. Checklist/General Goals

PHILOSOPHY

Possible Score: 12 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1.	A clear, written philosophy for language arts is available to all staff members and parents.	4	3	2	1	0
2.	Communication skills are regarded as an integral part of the total school program.	4	3	2	1	0
3.	Language instruction is integrated with other subjects and activites in the school.	4	3	2	1	0
4.	The curriculum builds upon and fosters the interrelatedness of the language arts through effective communication skills.	4	3	2	1	0

Checklist/General Goals (Continued)

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Possible Score: 56 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

5.	A current, local language arts curriculum guide has been cooperatively developed by teachers, administrators, and resource people.	4 3 2 1 0
6.	There is a language arts program with a multi-text supplement for each grade K-12.	4 3 2 1 0
7.	There is a stated language arts sequence of skills.	4 3 2 1 0
8.	Instruction is balanced among the components of the language arts program. Appropriate emphasis is given to:	
	(a) Listening skills	4 3 2 1 0
	(b) Oral communication	4 3 2 1 0
	(c) Written communication	4 3 2 1 0
	(d) Grammar (usage/mechanics)	4 3 2 1 0
	(e) Spelling (vocabulary building)	4 3 2 1 0
	(f) Handwriting	4 3 2 1 0
	(g) Critical thinking	4 3 2 1 0
	(h) Reading	4 3 2 1 0
	(i) Literature	4 3 2 1 0
9.	Administrative support is readily available for implementing or enhancing the language arts program.	4 3 2 1 0
10.	The school system has a definite, well-organized inservice program for improving the quality of instruction in the language arts classes.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/General Goals (Continued)

FACILITIES/MATERIALS

Possible Score: 32 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

11.	The language arts program makes effective use of resources including audio-visual material, enrichment, supplemental, print, and the community.	4	3	2	1	0
12.	The instructional material of the adopted language arts program is sufficient and in good condition.	4	3	2	1	0
13.	The school system provides effective facilities and equipment for the department.	4	3	2	1	0
14.	Classrooms are used to accommodate a variety of learning experiences.	4	3	2	1	0
15.	The media center has material classified and cataloged and readily available.	4	3	2	1	0
16.	Definite storage facilities, chalkboards, and display area is provided for preparation and instruction.	4	3	2	1	0
17.	There is sufficient material available to supplement, support, enrich, and duplicate for language arts instruction.	4	3	2	1	0
18.	Language arts publications are available and accessible for staff use.	4	3	2	1	0

Checklist/General Goals (Continued)

TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

Possible Score: 52 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

19.	Provision is made annually for discussion among staff responsible for implementing the total K-12 language arts program.	4 3 2 1 0
20.	Language arts teachers have an opportunity to discuss the department's budget and recommend program priorities.	4 3 2 1 0
21.	Teachers share ideas, material, and methods both formally and informally and intra-departmentally for a total communicative program.	4 3 2 1 0
22.	The language arts department uses available resource persons to assist with curriculum design, and instructional improvement.	4 3 2 1 0
23.	Language arts teachers have established efficient, effective procedures for classroom organization, distributing and collecting material, and supervising study.	4 3 2 1 0
24.	Teachers follow a plan for personal and professional growth through:	
	(a) Reading/professional library	4 3 2 1 0
	(b) Graduate studies	4 3 2 1 0
	(c) Workshops and conferences	4 3 2 1 0
	(d) Professional language arts associations	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/General Goals

TEACHER INVOLVEMENT (Continued)

25.	Assignments are clearly stated, and students are taught how to follow directions.	4 3 2 1 0
26.	A variety of methods are used to teach and evaluate communication skills.	4 3 2 1 0
27.	There is open communication between parents and language arts teachers other than report cards and failing notices.	4 3 2 1 0
28.	Regularly scheduled, non-crises parent/teacher conferences are encouraged along with periodic observations of classroom instruction.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/General Goals (Continued)

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Possible Score: 24 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

29.	The language arts program provides progression that is appropriate to the student's ability, with provisions for correcting, remediating, enriching, or accelerating.	4 3 2 1 0
30.	The program provides opportunities for each student to progress at a rate commensurate with his/her ability and experience daily success.	4 3 2 1 0
31.	Students are grouped for instruction according to their diagnosed needs.	4 3 2 1 0
32.	The structure of the program encourages each student to become responsible for his/her learning and provides opportunities for students to evaluate their program.	4 3 2 1 0
33.	Students are given opportunities to practice communication skills in real life applications.	4 3 2 1 0
34.	Student and parents of the school community understand the system of evaluation and the grading procedures.	4 3 2 1 0

B. Checklist/Specific Goals

KINDERGARTEN

Possible Score: 20

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1.	The instructional atmosphere provides students with a positive self-concept, a willingness to participate in group activities, and the opportunity to exhibit an adequate attention span.	4 3 2 1 0
2.	Lessons are designed to assist students in distinguishing between fact and fantasy.	4 3 2 1 0
3.	Activities are developed to help students recognize basic shapes and colors, identify left and right, explain opposites and practice left to right progression.	4 3 2 1 0
4.	Students can write the letters of the alphabet, first and last name, and the numerals from 1 to 20.	4 3 2 1 0
5.	Students can recite address, phone number, days of the week, and tell stories.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/Specific Goals

LOWER ELEMENTARY

Possible Score: 28 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1.	Read a simple book for pleasure.	4 3 2 1 0
2.	Practice use of dictionary, map and chart skills.	4 3 2 1 0
3.	Attempt simple analysis and dramatize stories.	4 3 2 1 0
4.	Write a simple statement and simple question and apply spelling skills to assigned work.	4 3 2 1 0
5.	Memorize and recite short stories and poems.	4 3 2 1 0
6.	Listen for directions, information and enjoyment.	4 3 2 1 0
7.	Participate in class discussion.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/Specific Goals

UPPER ELEMENTARY

Possible Score: 24 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1. Reads newspapers and magazines for current information to enhance the reading areas of pleasure and information.	4 3 2 1 0
2. Emphasizes using the appropriate size, slant, spacing and line quality in cursive handwriting while writing sentences, paragraphs and short reports.	4 3 2 1 0
3. Uses speaking activities frequently to develop oral communication.	
(a) Memorizes and recites short selections from prose and poetry.	4 3 2 1 0
(b) Answers questions and gives short reports in the appropriate language (formal/informal) while demonstrating fluency, organization, and voice control.	4 3 2 1 0
4. Opportunities are provided that develop listening skills for pleasure, ability to record main ideas, sequence of events and instruction for activities.	4 3 2 1 0
5. Thinking activities that distinguish between fact and opinion and investigate the selective nature of literature and media through class discussions.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/Specific Goals

MIDDLE SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH

Possible Score: 24 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1.	Reading activities probe the identification and analysis of basic literary genre including poetry, short stories, myths, novel, non-fiction, drama, and science fiction.	4 3 2 1 0
2.	The business letter, simple poetry forms, and short reports are part of writing assignments that reinforce a basic knowledge of mechanics, standard usage, and organization skills.	4 3 2 1 0
3.	A variety of sentence patterns is used in writing, including compound and complex forms.	4 3 2 1 0
4.	Provisions are made for taking notes and following oral directions.	4 3 2 1 0
5.	Fluency and organization for speaking in a variety of settings are developed.	4 3 2 1 0
6.	Through literature and media activities emphasis is placed on inferences and identification of the positive and negative aspects of print and non-print material.	4 3 2 1 0

Checklist/Specific Goals

SECONDARY/HIGH SCHOOL

Possible Score: 24 points

Circle appropriate response:

4 Strongly agree
3 Agree
2 Undecided
1 Disagree
0 Strongly disagree

1.	Literary selections generate skills in evaluating, interpreting, and analyzing.	4 3 2 1 0
2.	Well-organized narrative, descriptive and expository compositions are developed as essential writing skills.	4 3 2 1 0
3.	The theme, with an organized outline, introduction, thesis statement, body, and conclusion is assigned to reinforce mechanics, standard usage, and writing fluency.	4 3 2 1 0
4.	Oral communication projects include: a defense of positions in a variety of discussion settings, as well as identification and effective use of literary devices.	4 3 2 1 0
5.	Class activities assess the social and informational aspects of media and literature through critical analysis assignments.	4 3 2 1 0
5.	A variety of selections are assembled that take the experiences of mankind from literature and apply them to human experiences.	4 3 2 1 0

24

SUMMARY SCORES

GENERAL CHECKLIST

	Possible Score	Self-Apprasial Score
1. Philosophy	16	_____
2. Curriculum	56	_____
3. Facilities/Material	32	_____
4. Teacher Involvement	56	_____
5. Student Involvement	24	_____

SPECIFIC CHECKLIST

6. Kindergarten	20	_____
7. Lower Elementary	28	_____
8. Upper Elementary	24	_____
9. Middle School/Jr. High	24	_____
10. Secondary/ High School	24	_____
Total	304	_____

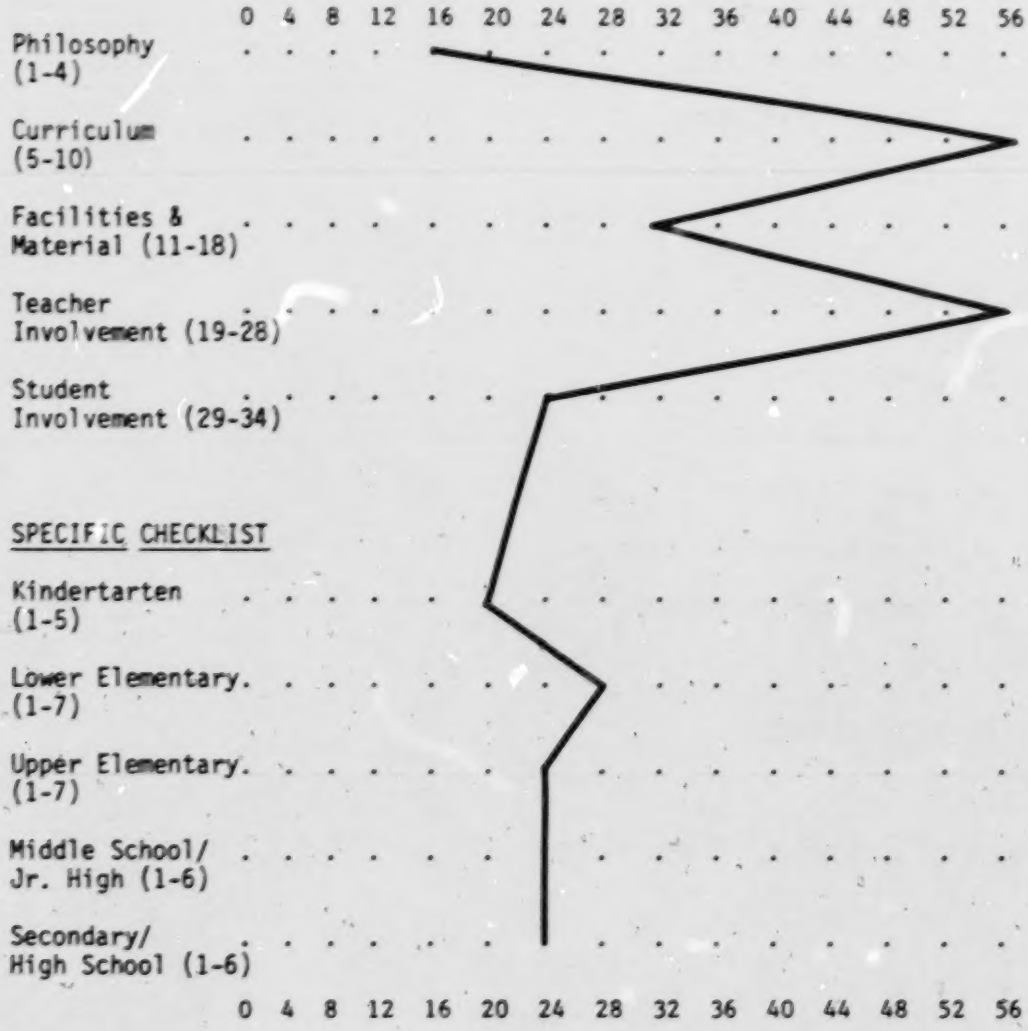
AREAS OF STRENGTH:

AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION:

COMPARISON CHART

The dots and connected lines on the graph indicate the highest possible summary of scores. Chart your self-appraisal scores to determine the areas of the language arts program that will require special attention.

GENERAL CHECKLIST


0 4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40 44 48 52 56
Philosophy (1-4)
Curriculum (5-10)
Facilities & Material (11-18)
Teacher Involvement (19-28)
Student Involvement (29-34)

SPECIFIC CHECKLIST

Kindertarten (1-5)
Lower Elementary. (1-7)
Upper Elementary. (1-7)
Middle School/ Jr. High (1-6)
Secondary/ High School (1-6)
0 4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40 44 48 52 56

V. Resources

In order to utilize all resources available, the language arts department should compile a list of all available materials in individual classrooms which could be shared by other members of the department.

A. Supplemental books and periodicals

Material	Teacher	Room number

B. Resource books - dictionary sets, encyclopedia, etc. (other than library media center)

Resources (Continued)

C. Posters, filmstrips, records
(other than library or media center)

D. Community resources

Resource person	Area of skill	Address/telephone

VI. Needs and Recommendations

Once the existing curriculum and total program have been reviewed, needs in the program should be apparent and recommendations made by the department to meet those needs.

A. Physical plant needs and recommendations

B. Staffing needs and recommendations

C. Material and resource needs - recommendations

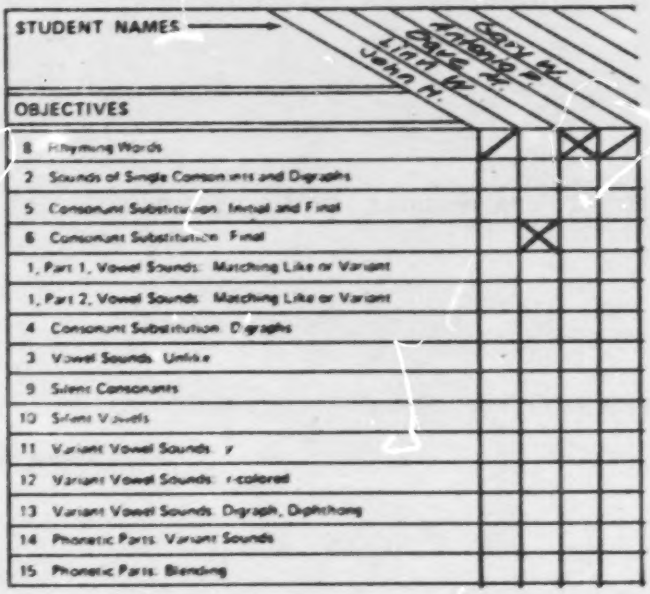
D. Program change needed - recommendations

E. Other needs -

VII. Checklist of Essential Skills

Develop a checklist that defines the skills for students at each level. These skills may be those identified by a criterion referenced system, standardized testing information, or any design that will indicate a logical sequence of learning skills.

This checklist could be useful in determining individualized programs that enrich, maintain or aid in refining student skills. Refer to Section III. B-3 to design the format.


STUDENT NAMES
OBJECTIVES
8 Rhyming Words
2 Sounds of Single Consonants and Digraphs
5 Consonant Substitution Initial and Final
6 Consonant Substitution Final
1, Part 1, Vowel Sounds Matching Like or Variant
1, Part 2, Vowel Sounds Matching Like or Variant
4 Consonant Substitution Digraphs
3 Vowel Sounds Unlike
9 Silent Consonants
10 Silent Vowels
11 Variant Vowel Sounds y
12 Variant Vowel Sounds r-colored
13 Variant Vowel Sounds Digraph, Diphthong
14 Phonetic Parts Variant Sounds
15 Phonetic Parts Blending

Example taken from Continuous Progress Monitoring Log-CTB McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California.

VIII. Program Description

Course descriptions provide a brief explanation of the subjects listed in a curriculum handbook. This can be a helpful resource for department continuity, as well as for counseling or enrollment sessions with students and parents.

Examples of various levels of language arts requirements are provided to assist you in writing descriptions for your courses.

ELEMENTARY/PRIMARY

First Grade Expectations

A. Writing

1. Forms all letters and numerals
2. Stay on correct line
3. Space properly
4. Keep paper neat and clean
5. Write first name correctly

B. Language

1. Tell a story in correct sequence
2. Speak distinctly
3. Make up stories by looking at pictures
4. Answer questions with complete sentences
5. Be mannerly and polite

C. Reading

1. Know number words through 10
2. Know 8 basic colors
3. Complete at least the first half of the first pre-primer/and accompanying workbook
4. Know basic word list of pre-primer

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

GRADE LEVEL: Fourth

This class will include exercises in both oral and written communication skills. Subjects to be discussed will be sentence and paragraph structure, grammar (noun, plurals and possessives, verbs and verb tenses, adjectives and their comparisons, pronouns and adverbs), punctuation (commas, periods, question marks, exclamation marks, and quotation marks), capitalization, dictionary usage, letter-writing, and library skills. Book reports will be given in a variety of oral and written forms.

Creativity will be encouraged through various types of original writing to include poetry, newspaper articles, letters, factual and fictional storywriting.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

SUBJECT: SPEECH

GRADE LEVEL: Seventh

An introduction to oral communications including diction, voice modulation, effective discussion, oral interpretation, role playing, and short plays.

1 Semester

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SUBJECT: COMPOSITION AND STUDY SKILLS

GRADE LEVEL: Eighth

First Semester - Effective study techniques such as how to organize time, how to organize course material, and how to take examinations.

Second Semester - Paragraph organization, themes and short research papers. Course texts: Scholastic's A Guide to Good Grades and A Guide to Good Writing plus supplemental material.

2 Semesters

HIGH SCHOOL

SUBJECT: ENGLISH IV

PREREQUISITE: ENGLISH III

The study of western literature with emphasis on English literature. Expository writing of informative, persuasive, and critical essays. Review of language, its development and semantics.

2 Semesters

SUBJECT: DEBATE II

PREREQUISITE: Teacher Approval

A competitive class which provides the intellectually motivated student with the opportunity to develop the essential skills in argumentation, research procedures, organizational methods, delivery techniques, and sound logic.

2 Semesters